

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

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AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: EGEN, ETRD, ELTN, SY

SUBJECT: REPORTED FIVE-FOLD INCREASE IN TURKISH TRANSIT FEES

1. BBC RECENTLY REPORTED IRANIAN COMPLAINTS OVER TURKISH DECISION TO INCREASE LAND TRANSIT FEES BY FIVE TIMES. WE WOULD APPRECIATE ANY INFORMATION ANKARA CAN SUPPLY AS SUCH DECISION WOULD HAVE IMPORTANT IMPLICATIONS FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN SYRIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES IN AREA WHO DEPEND HEAVILY ON ROAD TRANSPORT FROM EUROPE. IN ADDITION, THIS MISSION'S ORDERS FROM EUROPEAN SUPPLY POINTS ALSO PRESUMABLY WOULD BE MORE EXPENSIVE WHEN SHIPPED BY ROAD. SURFACE SHIPMENTS TO SYRIAN PORTS OF TARTOUS AND LATTAKIA HAVE JUST BECOME MORE EXPENSIVE WITH NEW 75 PERCENT SURCHARGE PLACED ON FREIGHT COSTS BY CONFERENCE LINES SERVING THESE PORTS. CONGESTION NOW SERIOUS AT BOTH PORTS WITH 56 VESSELS AT TARTOUS AND 83 AT LATTAKIA.

2. IS REPORTED TURKISH INCREASE ACROSS THE BOARD OR ARE THERE ANY EXCEPTIONS, E.G., DIPLOMATIC SHIPMENTS OF SUPPLIES AND CONSUMABLES? HOW IS NEW RATE APPLIED--PER TRUCK, SIZE OF TRUCK, PER KILO, ETC., AND WHAT IS NEW RATE PER UNIT?
MURPHY

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